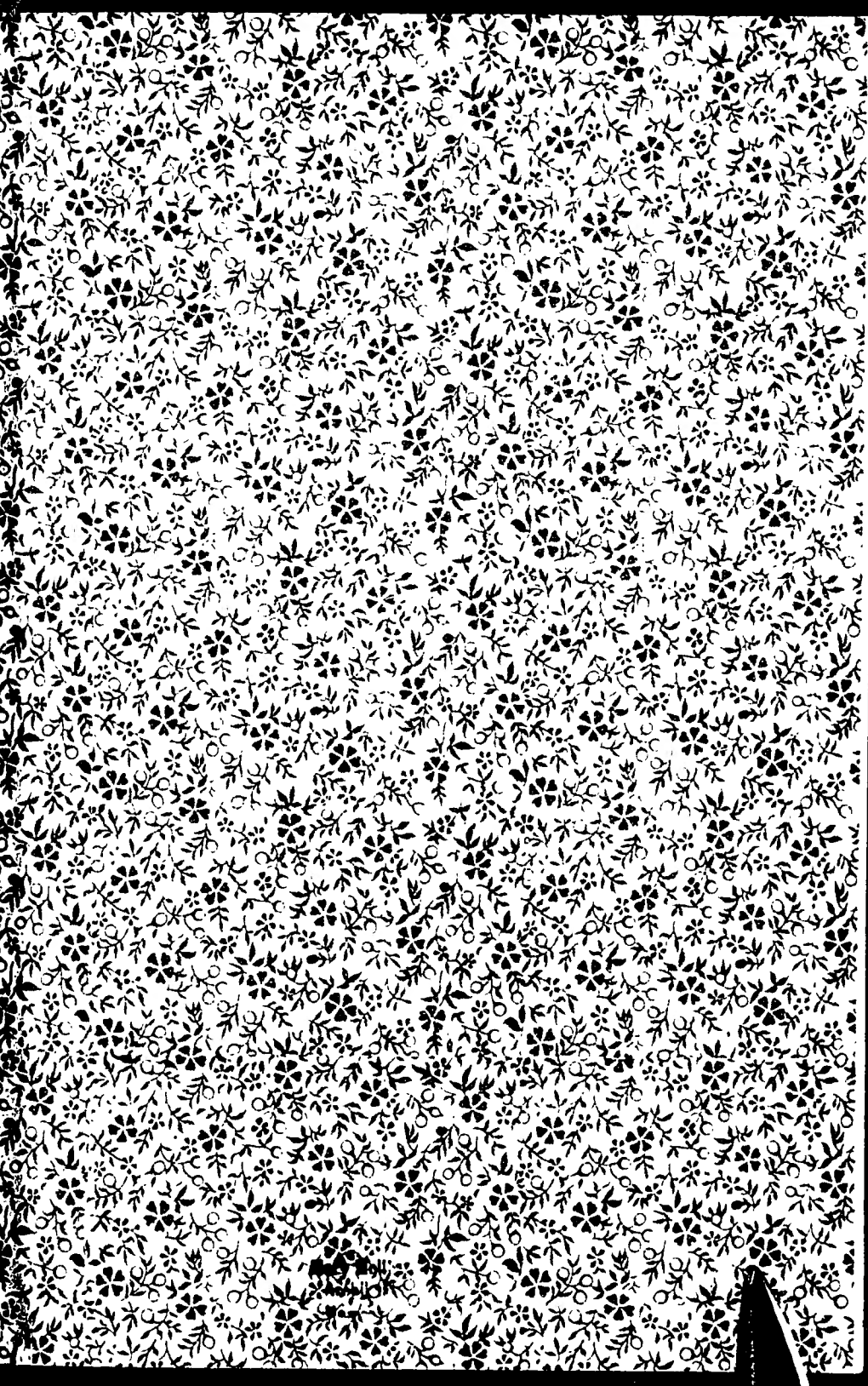


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Ethel & Jessie Boyd
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THE Poetry Group of the Calgary Branch of the Canadian Authors' Association has been organized for a period of five years. During that time the members have given much thought to the study of poetry and to the technique of their writing. Honors have come to members of the group from the Alberta Poetry Book sponsored by the Edmonton Branch of the Authors' Association, the Poetry Book of the Montreal Branch and the recent Dominion Poetry Competition. Some of the poems in this volume have been published previously, and others are appearing for the first time.

Selection Committee

SARA E. CARSLEY
LETTIE A. HILL
OLIVE M. FISHER





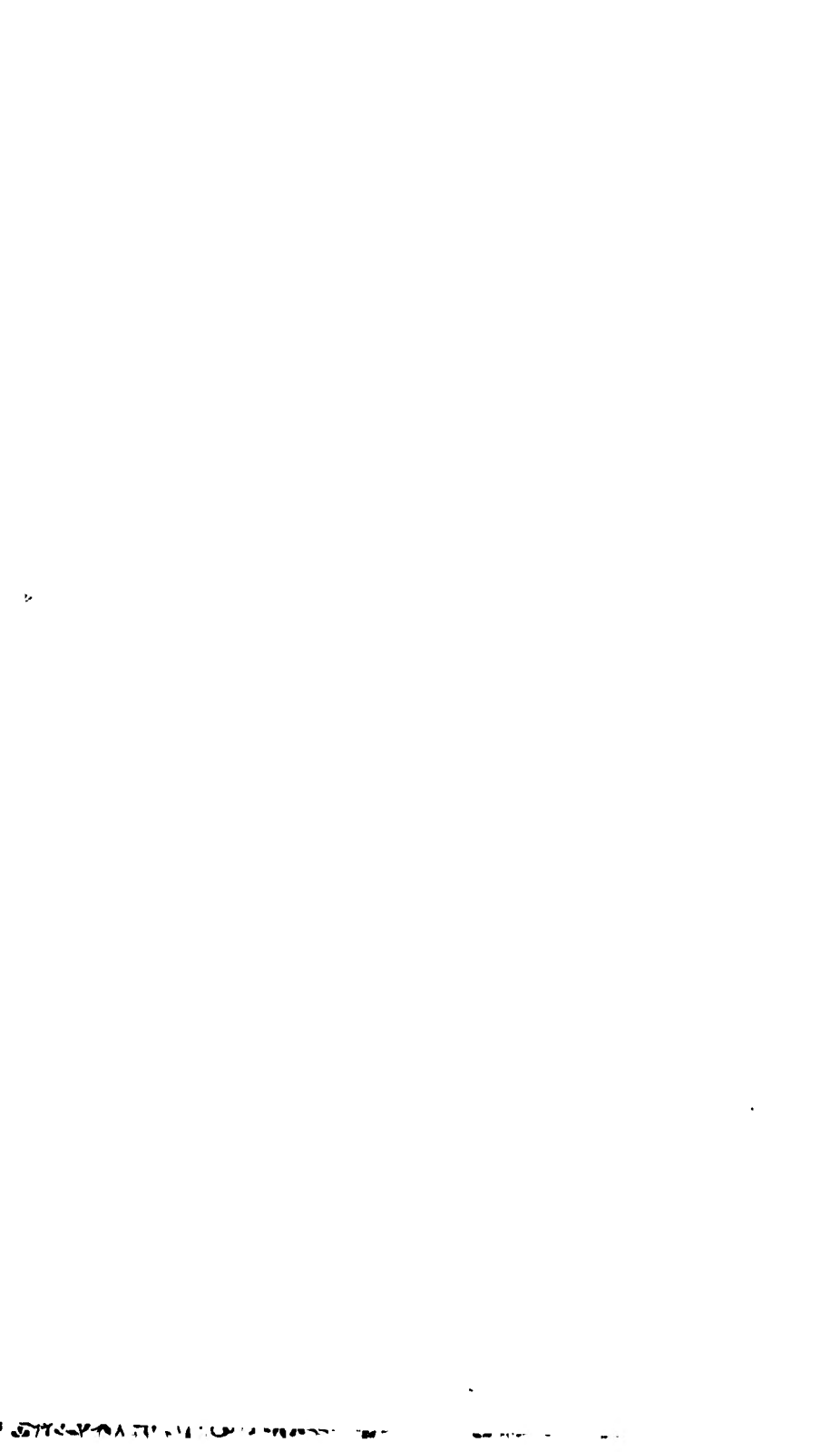
CONTENTS

ALEXANDER, JEAN :	Page
<i>Sea Song</i>	5
<i>Intrusion</i>	6
BOYD, ETHEL ERROLL :	
<i>October</i>	15
<i>Autumn</i>	16
BOYD, JESSIE DRUMMOND :	
<i>Triolet</i>	7
<i>The Dancer</i>	8
CARSLLEY, SARA E. :	
<i>Alchemy</i>	9
<i>Sinactha (Theocritus) Idyll 2</i>	10
CATLEY, ELAINE M. :	
<i>The Spirit of Poetry</i>	17
<i>Something Lovely Passed Me By</i>	18
DOWNE, A. R. (Lynette) :	
<i>Old Hands</i>	27
<i>Requiescat in Pace</i>	28
FORSYTHE, R. B. :	
<i>Ex Umbris</i>	37
GARBUETT, ELIZABETH :	
<i>Cathedral Mountain</i>	33
<i>Sunset</i>	34
GEDDES, HELEN :	
<i>Man Is The Measure</i>	31
<i>I Will Lie Down and Sleep</i>	32
HILL, AGNES ASTON :	
<i>Dream Sequence</i>	19 20
HILL, SYLVIA :	
<i>Etching</i>	29
<i>Sonnet to Death</i>	30
HILL, LETTIE ANN :	
<i>Dirge in Spring</i>	38
<i>Morning, Noon and Night</i>	39
MOODIE, MARGARET :	
<i>Rabbit</i>	11
<i>When the Night Descends with Her Peace</i>	12
MCKIM, VERA :	
<i>The Raggedy Wind</i>	25
<i>Petals</i>	26
OLSON, RUTH :	
<i>Children of the Resurrection</i>	23
<i>The Lingering Fire</i>	24
TINS, WINIFRED A. :	
<i>Carol</i>	21
<i>Dancing</i>	22
THOMSON, GEORGINA :	
<i>Weeds</i>	13
<i>Futility</i>	14
WILLIAMS, FLOS JEWELL :	
<i>Cassandra's Cry</i>	35
<i>The Other Life</i>	36

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Very Good
Archival
Bernard





Sea Song

GREY skies
And storm clouds
Over head . . .
Grey seas
And a tossing ship
And the sun's red.

(Grey seas
For a soft shroud
When I'm dead;
Grey foam
Of the wave's trough
For my bed.)

Grey foam
Curling the edge
Of the white spray
And a red sun
Marks the dawn
Of a new day.

—*Jean Alexander.*

Intrusion

SEE, you have taken all I loved in these;
The murmurous song at eventide of trees
A-stir with whispering branches and the cry
Of birds, as lonely spirited as I;
The brooks can laugh no more since you have come
To startle them to silence; they are dumb
As when the frosts of winter chill them fast;
The very winds are stilled. And so at last
I turn from nature's shrines. Because you came
The gods of earth can never be the same.

—*Jean Alexander.*

Triolet

YOU did not dream, you did not see
That night, how strong was my temptation
To fly with you to Araby:
You did not dream, you did not see
What Araby would mean to me
Its fragrance gone, a scene of desolation:
You did not dream, you did not see
That night—how strong was my temptation.

—*Jessie Drummond Boyd.*

The Dancer

NOW shadowy forms flit to and fro,
To and fro from the long ago,
While she glides with whimsical grace
Trails her robe of silver lace
Through castle halls and ancient ruins
Of singing stone.

Armoured knights and ladies too,
And witches who made their bitter brew,
An eerie sound of a witch's croak
And the whisper of a Druid's oak
Round the ruined castle and broken arch
Where she holds court.

Now she glides with whimsical grace
O sorceress of the human race,
Ethereal laughter on the breeze,
A silken rustle of poplar trees
And shadow play on the crumbling dial
And lichened stone.

Shadowy forms flit to and fro
Within Time's ceaseless ebb and flow
No withering hand he lays on you
No secret ever a mortal drew
O silver Moon from your treasury
Where you hold court.

Jessie Drummond Boyd.

Alchemy

(*First Prize in C. A. A. Competition*)

THIS that was you, by craft celestial wrought
Of carven bone

And warm rose-petal flesh, is come to naught.
Dust unto dust, by the wind's fingers strown;
So doom still overthrows
The pride of kings, the perfume of the rose.

You give your body to the blossoming mould.
The cold pure dew.
To all the lovely world you loved of old.
And these, life's broken beauty still renew.
Change upon mystic change.
In twilight caverns of enchantment strange.

And all your loved and vanished loveliness,
So subtly wrought,
Still drinks the sun, still feels the wind's caress.
In jewelled wing or glowing petal caught;
Its crystal atoms glide
Into the stream of life's exultant tide.

And you, the secret dweller of the shrine,
The inmost will,
Who made its silent loveliness divine,
You who were thought and action, joy and skill,
Since yet endures the shell,
Shall not its many-splendored pearl as well?

Dissolved to earth and lucent air once more,
And roaring foam,
Your flesh is one with sea and sky and shore,
As in old time, ere to its alien home
From far horizons came
Your valiant spirit like a singing flame.

Spirit of Life! His golden alchemy
Transmutes anew
To his own essence, whence it came to be.
The laughing soul that was the light of you,
Unchanging to abide
When winds are still, and silent is the tide.

—Sara E. Carsley



Simaetha
(*Theocritus*) Idyll 2.

SHINE fair, O moon, and softly will I sing
Sweet strains and manifold, entreating thee
To turn his airy thoughts from wandering,
And bring again my grievous love to me.

Lo, as the laurel shrivels in the fire,
As whirls my brazen wheel untiringly,
So shaken, so consumed of fierce desire,
My magic wheel, bring home my love to me.

Thrice pour I wine, and thrice I speak my charms,
While through the night the dogs howl mournfully,
From feast and song, from Love's enfolding arms,
My magic wheel, bring home my love to me.

Ah, bitter Love, wilt never give me rest?
Still are the winds, and silent is the sea,
But never still the torment in my breast;
My magic wheel, bring home my love to me.

Farewell, O Lady Moon: still will I bear,
As I have borne, mine anguish patiently;
Farewell, O Night, and stars that follow her,
Whose soundless wheels roll downward to the sea.

—*Sara E. Carsley.*

Rabbit

DID you ever see a rabbit
Pretend he was a stone?
A brown, furry rabbit,
In a field, all alone?

Have you seen a round stone,
With brown marks for ears,
Suddenly appearing
Where a rabbit disappears?

John said it was a stone,
Or a piece of old stump:
But I call it rabbit,—
Because I saw it jump.

—*Margaret B. A. Moodie.*



When the Night Descends With Her Peace

WHY, in the night, when I should be asleep,
Why, in the night, when the silence is deep,
Why must I rise,
And search out thy rest, knowing only thy heart
Will be open and welcoming, tho' teardrops start
Deep in thine eyes?

When the night descends with her peace on our dreams,
When the earth becomes silent and when even Life
seems
To share with death,
I shall come to thee then, lay my head on thy breast,
Thou who hast given much, wilt give me rest.
Thus my heart saith.

Tenderly night doth cover the shame of me,
Firmly dost thou lighten the blame from me,
Bring me to thee,
Lovingly, bravely, thou hearest this call of mine,
Wisely thou bearest the pain of this fall of mine,
To Calvary.

—*Margaret B. A. Moodie.*

Weeds

A STEP from the sidewalk's burning heat
There's a respite brief for tired feet
On a winding path through a vacant lot
That the civic fathers call a blot
On the city's fairness. There till today
Weeds in their glory held riotous sway—
Regal thistles and tawny grasses,
Sage and yarrow in pungent masses,
Dandelions early and late,
Mustard daring a rebel's fate,
Vagrant clover from lawns nearby,
Goldenrod grown stately and high.
How the tang of them, heady and sweet,
Carried one off from the city street,
Off to the fields and open spaces,
And barefoot days, and sunbrowned faces!
But fate had spoken. Alas, today
Men came with scythes and mowed them away,
And there they lie in the noonday sun,
Shrivelled and faded, their brief day done.
But I comfort myself with the secret thought
That the end of the battle has not been fought.
With pride undaunted they'll reappear
And flaunt their glory another year!

—*Georgina H. Thomson.*



Futility

A LITTLE moth thing
On dust-feathered wing
Fluttered in to the light
Through my window tonight.
It flew about dizzily,
Airily, busily.
Then from my sight,
Darted away again, aimlessly blundering
Into the night.

And I who sat watching its futile gyration,
What better my plight?
I, too, have come on the drift of creation
Into the light,
Here to go wondering, aimlessly blundering,
Till from men's sight
I, too, shall fade, and go drifting far out again
Into the night.

—*Georgina H. Thomson.*

Autumn

AUTUMN, stately as a queen,
Throws aside her robes of green,
Dons her lovely gold-lace gown
And her shining golden crown.

Glorious are the dreams she weaves,
Rich the gifts she now receives,
And she hoards the gleaming gold,
For a lover brave and bold.

Now she waits with royal grace
Longing for her lover's face,
Sometimes weeping with despair,
Oft-times wistful smiles are there.

Winter came with kingly pride
And he claimed his lovely bride;
But her lover's frosty kiss
Brought to Autumn, death—and bliss.

—*Ethel Errol Boyd.*



October

OCTOBER as a gypsy maid
Comes dancing, dancing o'er the hill,
With roses on her russet cheeks
She dances over mead and rill.

List to her sing to Pipes of Pan
As he flings golden pennies down.
They scatter all around her feet
While tall pine trees look down and frown.

With merry eyes she beckons us—
A little wayward madeap thing.
And leading us through woodsy paths
She begs of Pan more gold to fling.

Oh, wild and lovely gypsy maid,
In tattered gown of crimson lace,
With mischief in her eyes of brown
And hair wind-blown against her face.

—*Ethel Errol Boyd.*

The Spirit of Poetry

NOTHING is changed; nothing can ever change
In that one place you hold within my heart;
For as one peak in every mountain range,
By some intrinsic splendor stands apart.
Supreme, yet adding lustre to the rest,
A spur to climbers, and to eager souls
The challenge that demands of each his best,
The never-reached, but shining goal of goals—
So do you stand, alone, apart for me.
My work is in the valleys, but mine eyes,
Half-blind with tears and aching ecstasy,
Must ever lift to those serener skies
Whose radiance lights your brow, must ever seek
A path that climbs, but cannot reach, your peak.

—*Elaine M. Catley.*



Something Lovely Passed Me By

AS when a vagrant zephyr,
Steals through the room at dusk,
And leaves the faintest perfume
Of rosemary or musk—

So when life's shadows gather
To a slowly darkening sky,
Comes a sense of dim frustration,
And the hardly stifled cry:
"Something lovely passed me by."

Elusive as that zephyr,
Evading all pursuit;
Of *when* we failed to grasp it
Or *what* its flower or fruit—

Though crowned with ripe fulfilment,
We each at last will lie,
Implore a few years longer,
Plead Death with a lingering sigh:
"Something lovely passed me by."

—*Elaine M. Catley.*

Dream Sequence

SURELY not so soon
Do the twilight shadows lengthen
Along the sky—
It scarcely seemed an hour
Since you and I
Together went to meet the dawn,
All rose and amethyst—
And now the mist of evening falls,
With many a lovely rose
Yet folded in the bud.

How dreamlike now the ways we trod,
How transient the days—
But see!
God lights His little lamps on high,
When darkness falls—that we,
Returning homeward at the close of day
May not lose the way!

To think I wakened so reluctantly!
Sleeping, I had seemed to walk another sphere,
Where many flowers grew
And Time was marked by days and years;
There—I wandered down the happy ways
With one I loved,
But only for a little while, it seemed.
Though someone said
That for a lifetime we were wed.
(But that was just another dream,
'Twas really but a day!)
And now I watch God's angels light
Another candle in the night, for him,
(Perhaps his eyes grow dim.)



Dream Sequence (Continued)

Beyond all earthly telling, beautiful,
Here in these gardens where no leaf shall fall,
And yet, withal,
(Lord, see how my heart is bare.)
I can't forget
The one who walked with me,
And shared my earthly dream,
I only care
That he should share
All this. O, Father, see,
I will await him
At the outer gate:
Pray bear with me
And grant my whim,—
His little day grows late.

Ah, did I sleep,
And fail to keep
My vigil at the gate?
But no, the morning still is here
And . . . comes at last, my dear!
Together now, we go into Infinity,
Unmarked by days or hours,
And where unfading flowers
Lie whitely 'neath our wingèd feet,
Oh, can it be,
That it is but a dream within a dream?
(So sweet it is—so passing sweet!)

—*Agnes I. Aston Hill.*

Carol

SING we to Him a lullaby,
Who sweetly sleepeth
Where Mary dear, His mother mild,
Her fond watch keepeth.
Sing we to Him a lullaby.

Sing we to Him all tenderly,
Dear Babe. Who lieth
Upon His mother's loving breast
Whence all fear flieth.
Sing we to Him all tenderly.

Sing ye to Him, angelic host,
Who now assaileth
The home and power of Satan's might
Which yet prevaieth.
Sing ye to Him, angelic host.

Sing ye to Him. oh Shepherds. sing!
Your Shepherd liveth,
Who for His strayed and wandering ones
His own life giveth.
Sing ye to Him. oh Shepherds, sing!

Yea, sing we all in ecstasy!
Our God appeareth
To us in lowly form;
Our praise He heareth.
Yea, sing we all in ecstasy!

—Winifred A. Tims.

Dancing

THE Fir Trees are dancing in the wind tonight :
See how they bob, and fling their hands about,
And bend their heads,
Yet hold their backs erect against the storm,
Like Red Men, in their strange, outlandish dance,
Flexing the knees alone,
The very crash and thunder of the wind,
Sounding in smashing chords, discordant peals,
Keeps them to time, as the loud drum
Beats on and on monotonous, through the night,
Till with the dawn both wind and drummers cease,
The Red Men sleep,
The Fir Trees sigh—and rest.

--Winifred A. Tims.

The Children of the Resurrection

PERHAPS some day from out superior eyes
I shall survey you calmly, still and wise,
Clothed in white garments fresh from Paradise
Bought at a place we knew as Calvary.
When the grave's slow doorway opens outward-wise
And cerements are folded by and by,
And we call Home the thing we called the Sky,
Having closed books of old geography:
Perhaps I'll meet you on some aether street,
And slowly, as once here, our eyes shall meet—
Shall I be still then? Shall my heart not beat
More loudly than when angels on the street
Accost me, as their radiant feet go by?

—Ruth E. Olson.



The Lingering Fire

COULD I have chrysoberyl
From Ceylon or Brazil,
A large black India pearl:
I'd like them; still . . .

Rather than chrysoprase
Or emerald stirred
With green fire, or an opal
Like blue milk curd—
Give me the lingering fire
In the heart of a word!

—*Ruth E. Olson.*

The Raggedy Wind

THE raggedy wind came out of the west.
Out of the west came he,
With a vagabond grace and a vagabond smile.
And the song of a gypsy free.
He lulled me to rest
With his songs of the west
Of dancing streams lit with golden dreams
Where a silver moon on a pathway gleams
Magic and gay and free.
And I sighed a sigh as I bade him good-bye.
This raggedy wind, laughed he.

But oft in the hush of a calm spring night
He beckons and calls
With a wild delight
As I lie in my bed
And turn out the light
Then clench my fingers
And hold them tight.
As the raggedy wind goes by.
As the raggedy wind goes by.

—Vera McKim.

Petals

QUIET, memory, quiet.

Lest I forget

The stilling calm of tears once wet.

Peace, memory, peace.

Lest skies so blue

Are once more dimmed in morning dew.

Hush, memory, hush,

Lest I recall

Red roses 'neath my garden wall.

—*Vera McKim.*

Old Hands

I LOVE the beauty of old hands—
Old hands blue-veined
And marked with living,

Worn hands—
Long years of toil revealing
Whose every touch
Holds strength and healing
So eloquent of Life's demands.
I love the beauty of old hands.

There is such beauty in old hands
So sure, so deft
Withal so fragile,
Slim hands—
Bespeaking gentle living
That have known much
Of gracious giving
Their frailty tenderness commands
There is such beauty in old hands.

—*Lynette.* (Mrs. A. R. Downe.)



Requiescat in Pace

SPEAK no ill word to his reproach or shame
We who know not the why of it, dare we seek to
blame?

Who felt not the goad that urged him stay his
breath

How shall we seek to judge the manner of his
death?

For him the gleam was darkened, the way of life
was rough.

And so let pity shroud him, silently It is
enough.

And kindly Mother Earth will take him to her
ample breast

Nor ever question why he comes thus early to his
rest,

Nor grant him less of sun, or waving verdure spread
Above the fragrant soil wherein he finds a quiet
bed:

And for the harassed soul which sought a premature
release

Wrapped in calm, eternal stillness may he ever rest
in peace.

—*Lynette.* (Mrs. A. R. Downe.)

Etching

RAINDROPS

Dripping
Down the window-pane—
Like pearls
Slipping
From a broken chain,—

Jewels
Glist'ning
In the silvered light
While I'm
List'ning
For your song, tonight.

Softly,
Your words,
Falling, one by one
Music
Of birds,
And the night is gone.

—*Sylvia Hill.*

Sonnet to Death

WHY do men shudder at your silent call,
O unknown keeper of the Inn of Peace?
There are no favored in your banquet hall—
All who quaff Lethe's wine find care's surcease.
'Tis strange that footsteps falter at your gate
When you are but Life's continuity—
The one omega of each mortal fate
And alpha of our immortality.

O kindly host— who waits to welcome me
And give me shelter from Life's storm and stress,
In some white chamber of your hostelry
I pray that you will lave my weariness.
O Death, what treasures do you hold in fee
Within your portals of eternity!

— Sylvia Hill.

Man is the Measure

MAN is the measure of all things unto himself
Whose subtlest wisdom measures the mind of
man.

But the flowers and the trees and the grasses covered
grey earth
Ere he began.

Wide are the ways of earth he wanders in,
Desert, prairie, and forest, change at his touch;
But when man has gone to his bones in the naked rock,
Who will praise such?

Nerves wearied of man and his follies, pain and
distress

The wide rivers of heaven, sea without shore,
Earth of many directions, the green lovers of light,
Soothe and restore.

Before a man had raised his chant to the sun
The pasque-flower lifted its face from the prairie
loam;

When all the winds have listened his chorus in vain,
It will dwell at home.

—*Helen Guddes.*



I Will Lie Down and Sleep

I will lie down and sleep.
Out of the grief
Of passions that contend
Without relief.
Until, regardless grown,
On time's blue curving shore
I return, tree, flower, or stone,
Or come no more.

I will lie down and sleep,
Out of the pain
That circumstance abounds
To wake again.
Until, all mindless sunk
In that calm sea,
I dwell, sand, water, shell,
Or cease to be.

—*Helen Geddes.*

Cathedral Mountain

(Third Prize in C.A.A. Competition)

IT stands amid impassive solitude,
A master Architect's triumphant dream;
Its purple wings of vivid shadows brood
In benediction over hill and stream;
Its massive towers stab the virgin blue
With spires of snow, while far below there lies,
In cloistral calm, a lake of jade-green hue
Reflecting lonely rock and lonely skies.

The Unknown God's cathedral hewn in stone—
From pediment to crypt in dark abyss
It scorns trite, empty rites, and creed out-grown.
No temple to the little gods is this,
But a tall tabernacle, austere, vast,
Flung skyward by the great Iconoclast.

—Elizabeth Garbutt



Sunset

LOUD sirens blow
At six o'clock:
Through factory doors
Gaunt figures stalk.

I rise and watch
With eager eye
To see my man
Come striding by.

Almost I hear
His whistled call
Resounding through
Our tiny hall.

Old habits prove
Too strong for me,
I turn away
Reluctantly.

No need to wait!
I shall not see
My own good man
Come home to me.

Long months ago
His work was done;
The dead come not
At set of sun.

Elizabeth Garbutt.

Cassandra's Cry

WHILE rulers scoffed, and sent men forth who
died,

Within the walls of Troy, Cassandra cried.—

“Drums will beat,
To shuffling feet,
Of men who fight,
For wrong and right,
Death will fly,
In the high sky,
And our sons sleep,
In oceans deep,
Gifts from gods,
Will forge the rods,
That twist to pain,
The world again,
Every breath,
Will suck in Death,
And man and child,
Will be defiled,
Muted songs,
Will tell of wrongs,
And Beauty, fled
Before the dead.”

Troy is no more. Yet still endures the cry,
And strutting fools still send men out to die.

—*Flos Jewell Williams.*

The Other Life

AS a clean wind, riding across the valleys bright,
The hills and flowering plains,

Frets at my window panes,

Barred against light.

So, meeting you, dreams from some unremembered
ways

Of life beneath a kinder sun,

Beat on my weary run

Of muddled days.

—*Flos Jewell Williams.*

Ex Umbris

THE barbed spine from which but yesterday
The last leaf fluttering fell—
This bare, black, pointed barb of wind-swept tree.

The leaden sky from which but yesterday
The last flake fluttering fell—
The dull-eyed child of storm-spent clouds on high.

And yesterday
Into

The tireless sea, wounded, down dropped
A lonely sea-bird, fluttering as it fell—
Into that aching void of wind-swept sea.

This bare black barb,

This dull-eyed child,

This aching void of foam,
Is memory.

—*R. B. Forsyth.*



Dirge in Spring

I THINK that each fresh spring
My heart must break anew
Thinking of you,
Sealed in your quiet grave
Away from all this joyous
Caravansary of life;
This tapestry of new leaves come again
This bacchanalia of singing birds
Breasting a green-gold canopy of light,
This choral rain upon a thirsty earth.

You were my April after winter drought,
You were the singing and the joy
That made of all my days a vernal being.
No more the spring can call to me,
No more the mounting tide of your delight
Around my spirit, eager waters lave,
Like you, my heart lies quiet in its grave.

— *Lettie Ann Hill.*

Morning, Noon and Night

THE deepening East, a scarlet poppy burns.
The loud and urgent pageantry of day
Sounds out its elarion to the silent hosts.
Along the earth, the dawn-wind draws its length.
Beneath the sea, deep murmurings portend
Of vocal harmonies and thundering chords.
The sun, a freighted galleon, drowns in gold.

The meridian sky, a blue enamel wears.
The white and gilded brillianey of noon
Beats ceaselessly upon the drowsing world.
All earth lies supine in this mid-day hour.
Her meagre ribs she vainly seeks to clothe
In shimmering, lambent veils of quivering light
Bright, sharp and glittering as a drawn sword.

The empurpled sea, a silent courier brings.
The vaporous amethyst of evening mists
Enfolds the earven pillars of the day.
A white moth floats by like a drifting leaf.
Its silver wings against a rose-white flame
Fan stealthily the languid lotus air.
The moon, a red lamp, lights the sycamore.

—*Lettie Ann Hill.*

